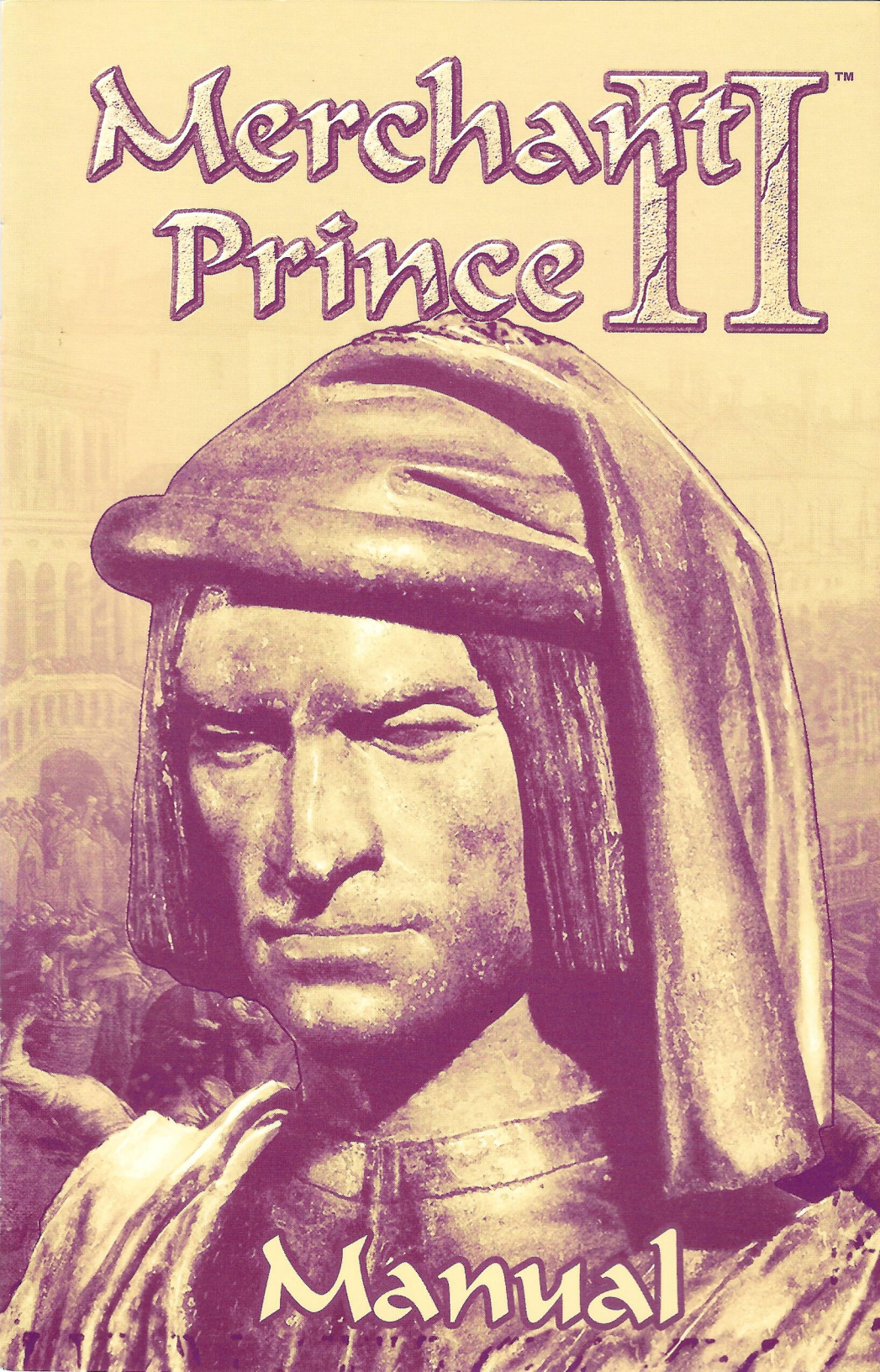
Merchant Prince II™



Manual

Win a trip to Italy - see page 43 for details!!!

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Introduction

Renaissance Venice: A place of beauty, art and intrigue. The merchant princes set forth from its refined courts to visit the fabled cities of the world, and brought back the world's riches. Gold and ivory from Africa, silks and spices from Asia, and all the wonders of civilization found their way to Venice's halls. This small city of 100,000 people came to control its own trading empire, while fending off the Turks to the east and the rest of Europe to its north and west.

Though they presented a united face to the rest of the world, amongst themselves the merchant princes schemed and manipulated, using threats, lies and even poisons to destroy each other. Such institutions as the Venetian senate, the College of Cardinals, and even the papacy itself became battlegrounds in their never-ending feuds. Their trade wars could threw economies into turmoil, and their passions and desires echoed around the known world.

Merchant Prince 2 takes you to the heart of their struggles for wealth and power. Money is the crux of the battle, the first player to accumulate 1,000,000 florins establishes himself as the preeminent Merchant Prince (and the winner of the game). Commerce makes up the heart of this effort, with the player fearlessly sailing the seven seas, leading caravans over ancient roads, and braving dangers from around the world in order to turn a profit. But one can never ignore politics, for the power of the Doge can build fortunes - or crush them. Just as such wealthy Italians as the Borgias and the de Medicis had themselves made pope, using the position to greatly expand their influence, so too can players turn the papacy to their own advantage.

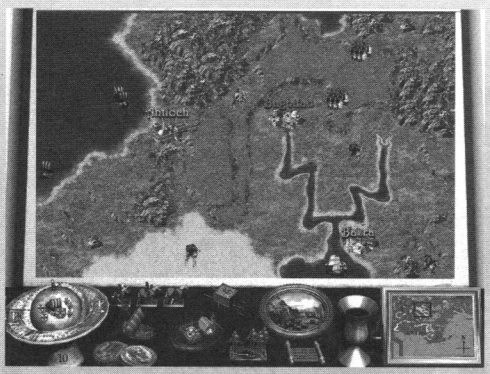
The Renaissance era provided unparalleled opportunities for Venetians, as well as unparalleled dangers. Whoever can best take advantage of both the good and the bad will become the next Merchant Prince.

Quick Start

While reading this entire manual will teach you how to play Merchant Prince II, many gamers want to get started right away. This section guides you through that process.

After viewing the introduction, click on the "Start New" button. At the game set-up screen, click on the line next to the human figure until you see it filled

with ships and a mule train. Then click on each of the calculator images until each shows a hand. Now click on the pirates and storms buttons until the color next to each of them is green. Finally, adjust the game length to 15 years. This is the easiest set up. Click on the "Accept" button to continue.



The Movement Screen

The movement screen shows you a map of the world, and your active unit blinks to get your attention. First, you should buy something for this galley to trade. Click on the buy/sell button to go to the Market screen. Click on the glass goblets and your cursor turns into one. Your wealth, shown in the upper left-hand corner, deducts the price of one cargo unit of these trade goods. Move your cursor over one of the empty trunks in your hold, click the button again, and the harbor stevedores dump all that glass in your ship. You can also click and drag cargo into your hold. You could click on the next cargo bay to get more glass, but you might want to guard your investment. Hire some of Venice's renowned heavy guards the same way you bought the glass (the guards are the shields with the cross). Click on the heavy guards again to return your cursor to its normal state, and then click done to get out of port.

Sailing the seven seas is as easy as pointing and clicking or using the arrow keys. In this case, you want to sail southwest around the boot of Italy. Sail along the Italian coast until you see Rome. Clicking on the city takes you into its port.

Anytime one of your trade units hits port, you go right to market. Go ahead and sell your glass (take a look at the nice profit you make), and get ready to sail back to Venice. This time we'll set up a trade route to let the computer handle all the details for you. If you click on the commodities button or right click on Venice, you'll see that it has a profitable demand for Rome's grog. Once you are back at the Movement screen, click on the Trade Route button on the left-hand side of the screen. On the Trade Route screen, click on Rome. The city's name appears, and you can fill cargo as you would on the Buy/Sell screen (except that here it doesn't cost anything). Throw a barrel of grog and a heavy guard into the hold, and then click on Venice. In the Venice section of

the trade route, drop in a glass goblet and a heavy guard. Note that red arrows show you the route your ship will take as it makes this run. Click Done to close the screen. Now your galley will begin this trade route, running goods back and forth, and making you some florins along the way.

Finishing Your Turn

You have two more ships and a mule train with which to experiment. Load them up with cargo and guards and sail the world! When you have moved everything you want to move, click the "Venice" button. Familiarize yourself with the various buildings here. In a few turns you'll want to start buying more units, bribing senators and controlling cardinals, but for now just look around. You might want to go to the Guildhall to save your game and modify other game options. When you've visited as much of the city as you like, click the done button to return to the Movement screen. There, it's time to click the end turn button.

When you end your turn, you get a summary of costs and profits. The first line shows you the profit your Venetian estates brought you - it never changes. Next, you see the salary of your guards. Later in the game, it lists senatorial bribes, money your cardinals bring in from selling indulgences, income from government offices, and expenses for hiring mercenaries. These all add up to the amount of money you will have in the next turn. Click OK and the computer will handle its turns.

Exploring the Game

Continue to send out your trading units to make you some money. The sepia historical map should give you a good idea where some cities are located, and these can give you some profitable trade routes. Cities with red names are closed to your trade, but later in the game you can either bribe your way in or use mercenaries to conquer them. You will want to expand your trading ability by buying more units. Go to the Venice screen and access the galley. This allows you to buy whatever unit you want wherever you want it, though you might want to avoid buying cogs in land-locked cities. You might want to get a mule train running between Venice and Rome, or start exploring the interiors of Europe and Africa.

You want to be involved in politics before 1310, when the Doge comes up for election. When you've saved up some florins, go to the Doge palace to bribe a senator. Look for the one with the smallest red or yellow bar. That indicates

his loyalty to his current faction. The less loyal he is, the cheaper his bribe. You can offer less money for a lower chance of success. Click on the one you want to bribe and click the bribe button. Even if he does not join you, he keeps the bribe money. If you succeed, he takes on your crest to indicate his new allegiance. Now you have a vote in the next Doge election. You'll need that vote in order to get appointed to office. These positions of importance give you troops, more money, and greater influence in the senate.

You might also want to buy yourself a cardinal or two. Cardinals bring in money from the sale of indulgences at a rate set by the pope. They also allow you to vote for a new pope whenever the old pope dies of natural causes - or is assassinated. Becoming pope allows you to change the price of indulgences, excommunicate cities, call crusades, and make money by selling cardinal positions to whoever can afford it. You do not have enough time in this game to become pope, but you can at least start making money with a cardinal or two. These are the primary screens you access throughout the game. There are others, and you should explore them as early as possible. Once you have finished this tutorial, you are ready to play a full game and make the world your own.

The Initial Screen

Start New

This option takes you to the Setup screen and lets you configure a new game world.

Load Old

This option calls up a list of saved game files. You can choose to search another drive by highlighting the appropriate drive letter in the second column.

History

This option allows you to review player histories and to compare players' achievements.

Multiplayer

Click here to start up a LAN or Internet game.

Credits/Intro

This option allows the player to replay the intro and view the credits

Exit

This option takes the player back to Windows.

The Setup Screen

Player Icons

The left-hand column shows four symbols representing the four players of the game. As you click on the picture, the icon cycles through the available choices. Select either a Human player, or one of five levels of computer player: Novice, Fair, Average, Good, or Expert. You can also make any of the players human or computer.

Starting Resources

The next column shows each player's starting resources. As you click on the picture, you see both your money and the number of trade units with which you start. The options are Easy Start, Normal Play, and Challenge!

Easy Start: 2000 Florins, 2 Small Galleys, 1 Small Cog, 1 Donkey Caravan

Normal Play: 1500 Florins, 1 Small Galley, 1 Small Cog

Challenge: 1000 Florins, 1 Small Galley

Map Options

In the top right corner of the screen, you can choose from four map options: Historic Map, Random Map, Saved Map File, and Scenario. The Historic Map allows the player to travel through Europe, Africa, and Asia during the period simulated by the game. The economy changes between plays, changing some market access and commodity availability. The Random Map Generator uses realistic terraforming concepts and market evolution theory to create a completely new world for you to explore. The Saved Map File option allows you to replay a random world or specific economy you have saved (see Guildhall options on the Venice Screen for details on how to save map files). The Scenario option allows you to play premade scenarios, five of which are described in the Scenarios section.

Innovations On/Off

This allows you to decide for yourself if you want to research new technologies during the game. The default game does not allow for research. When this option is on, however, players can choose from a number of different innovations to fund. Whenever a new innovation is funded to completion, you get whatever bonus it confers. While the price of each innovation is set, the time it takes to come to fruition is variable.

Random Events

Below the map options, you can choose the frequency with which you encounter some random events by cycling both the Storms and the Pirates buttons through their three options: Rare, Average, and Frequent. At the Rare setting, storms and pirates only occur in open ocean - squares that have no bordering land. At the average setting, open ocean storms and pirates are more frequent, and desert storms, rockslides and land-based brigands may hinder your progress. At the Frequent setting, storms can occur even in coastal waters, and pirates, brigands and highway robbers all pose a threat.

Game Length

In the lower right corner, you can set the length of the game by dragging the button along the sli der bar. Possible intervals are 15 years, 30, 60, 100, 150 or 192 years (which puts you right up to Columbus' discovery of the new world, and makes your flat-world map and viewpoints obsolete). The default value is 100 years.

Accept Button

When you have arranged the world to your satisfaction, click on the Accept button at the bottom of your screen. If you chose either historic or saved Map files, your screen becomes black as the computer generates the maps and

economies of the game. If you chose the Random Map option, your computer has to work a little harder. A message appears which reads "Please wait while generating new world" and indicates by slider and percentage what portion of the work is done. If you have opted for a scenario, you get a list of the available ones.

The Chat Bar

A chat bar runs along the bottom of the screen, and it allows you to converse with other players and for them to converse with you.

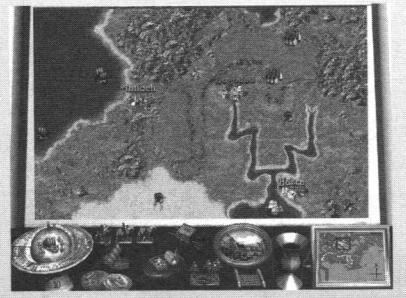
Multiplayer Games

Merchant Prince II allows for two kinds of multiplayer games - turn-based or simultaneous movement. If you create a play-by-e-mail game or have only one machine for all the players, you want to play the standard turn-based game. If you play over a LAN or Internet, however, you can play the simultaneous movement game.

If everyone is using the same computer, you can begin the multiplayer game from the game set-up screen. Just set whichever player positions you want to be human as human. If you want to set up a LAN or Internet game, however, click the multiplayer button onthe initial screen. This allows you to either host or join a game. If you join the game, just click on the join button and then choose a multiplayer game. If you host the game, enter a name for it and then start setting the game parameters like you would for a single-player game.

A box appears under your crest. Click that when you are ready to proceed. If any of the clients change anything, however, your check will go away and you can click to proceed when you are ready. Note that in a multiplayer game, the host is always player one. Other players get their positions based on how quickly they join.

Players also need to decide whether to go for a turn-based or simultaneous-movement game. The turn-based game proceeds like the normal single player game. In the simultaneous-movement game, however, players units move at the same time and as the players input their commands. The first player to a city may well buy what's there to be had. Players start with warehouses full of glass, however, so they will have complete cargoes for at least the first turn.



Movement Screen

Expect to see a lot of this screen. From here, your vessels can explore and discover new cities and new opportunities for trade. Your armies can attack closed cities and open them for the glory of Venice - or reserve their precious commodities for you and only you, denying access to all opponents. This screen is also where all the day-to-day happenings - storms, pirates, and routine shipping runs - take place.

Active Units

The active unit is the unit whose turn it is now. The computer cycles through each unit (or group) you control each turn. If you don't want to deal with a particular vessel or caravan or mercenary when it becomes active, you can click on the WAIT button to pass that unit to the end of the queue. It becomes active again after each of your other units has had its turn. (An active unit has a green flashing background if it has any movement points left this turn.) An active unit with a red flashing background has no more movement points this turn. If more than one unit is in a square, the units are considered stacked and the background appears gray. You can see how many movement points the active unit has left just below the corner map.

Right-click on a unit to make it the currently active unit.

Left click on the active unit to center your view on that unit.

Groups

A group can include up to 15 units. Moving units in groups allows for mutual protection against pirates. Groups travel together (at the movement rate of the slowest group member if the group contains a mix of unit types) and become active together. (An active group has a green flashing background if it has movement points remaining for the turn. If more than one group occupies a square, the groups are "stacked" and the background appears gray.) To make a group the current active group, right-click on it or click the **GROUPS** button. Right-clicking on a stack lets you view and access all the groups in the stack. If the stack is in a city, click the **GROUPS** button and use the **NEXT** button to cycle through the stack. Make any group in the stack active by clicking the **MOVE ME** button. The text bar at the bottom of the Movement screen shows how many movement points the active group has left.

Making Groups

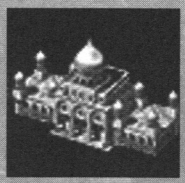
You can group several individual units together or move units between groups if two or more groups occupy the same square. Click on the **GROUPS** button to access the Modify Groups box. Click and drag units from box to box until you get the combinations you want. You cannot have more than 15 units in a group. The unit with the least remaining movement points in a group sets the remaining movement points for the whole group (and that number might be zero). If you take all the units out of one group box, its name changes to the default "New Group!"

If you have two or more groups in a square, use the Next Group button to access other units. Only two groups can appear in the Modify Groups box at one time.

You can rename any group by clicking in the appropriate text box, deleting the old name and typing in a new one. You might want to give them distinctive names or name them after their trade routes.

Splitting Groups

You can also divide large groups into two or more smaller parties. Double click on the active group or left click on the GROUP button to bring up the Modify Groups window. You'll see the active group and an empty box named "New Group!" Drag units from box to box until you are satisfied with the arrangements. You can also rename these groups just as you could when you made a group.



Cities

You can right-click on a city to get its commodity information. The City Screens section provides more complete details. The column on the left side of the screen shows the trading status of all four players. A red-bordered crest emblazoned DENIED indicates that that the city's leaders have forbidden that faction from trading there. A green-bordered crest emblazoned ACCESS indicates that that they let the player trade in this city. A green-bordered crest emblazoned OWNER shows that a player controls who may trade in the city.

Two broad columns of item icons show all the commodities available in the game, whether the city buys or sells that commodity, and what the city pays for each load. Multiple icons of one item indicate the number of units available; multiple gray or "shadow" icons indicate the demand for those items. The

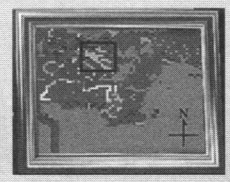
exact number of items supplied and demanded is available in the Market Screen or from the **COMMODITIES** button in the Commodities Ledger.
If the Black Death has infected a city, the Text Bar at the top of the screen displays the reminder, "Has the Plague."
If a player has warehouses in a city, their contents are displayed at the bottom of the screen.
To view the groups in a city, click on the **GROUPS** button and use the **NEXT** button to cycle through the stack.

Automatic Movement

Clicking on any square on the map (while a unit is currently active and has movement points left) causes that unit to plot a route to the location that you clicked. If the route is acceptable, click the **GO** button and the unit moves along the route until it either runs out of movement points or runs out of route. To plot a different course, click on a different destination square and try again.
Since ships cannot move onto land and caravans go on the ocean or large rivers, if you accidentally click on a destination square that is impossible for your current active unit to cross, you receive a message telling you "Unit cannot move here". The sepia-tone map with which you start the game is not always the same as reality.
However, if you click on an unexplored square as a destination, your unit will explore as far as it can up to it. A unit remembers its destination from turn to turn, and continues to automatically move toward it. Even events like storms and pirate attacks do not stop a unit, and if the vessel survives the event, it continues on its way.
At the start of your turn, the computer runs through your queue of groups, checking to see what orders they have. It executes any automatic movement commands, moving any ships or caravans following previously established trade routes. It also moves groups that are continuing previous movement orders, and shows you the paths they propose to take. If the group's route is fine, click the **GO** button, and the group proceeds on its way. If you want to change the route, either click on a new location or click the **GROUP** button to bring up the Modify Groups box, and click on **CANCEL ORDERS.** Now you can plot a new course. Units moving automatically still move under the restrictions of their modes. Thus, a ship sailing in **GREEN** mode sticks close to land wherever possible, so it might plot a very circuitous route to achieve its destination.

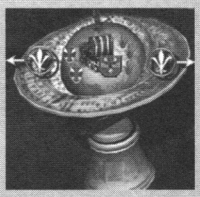
Canceling Orders

If you need to change orders for a moving unit, click anywhere on the screen. A box appears asking, "Cancel this units orders?" Click the **YES** button to halt the unit or click **NO** if you want to let it continue. If you want to give new orders to a unit that has already finished its turn, right click on the unit to bring up the Group Box. Then click the **CANCEL ORDERS** button.



Mini-Map

This lower right map window displays a smaller version of the world map. The dark red rectangle denotes the area shown in the movement window. You can center the dark red rectangle, and therefore the detail map, by clicking on any point in the corner map. You can also right click the corner map to see a larger version of the world map.



Active Unit Window

This window shows the first unit of the active group. If a group has more than one unit, a label appears telling which unit of the total group number is pictured. To see the other units in the active group, click on the arrows to either side of the window. The horizontal box below the window shows what commodities or guards each unit carries.

Wait Button

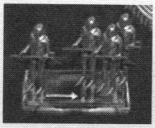
This button lets you skip a unit but come back to it before the end of your turn. Active unit status passes around the queue of all groups with movement points remaining until you use their movement points or click **STAY**.

Stay Button

Clicking this button takes the active group out of the queue for the rest of the turn. It will not become active again this turn unless you manually select it.

Go Button

This button is dark unless you have given your active group or unit a course to follow. To plot a course, click on whatever square you want your group to reach. A series of arrows and X's shows the proposed route. If you do not like the chosen path, click on your unit again to erase it, and try again. If you like the course, click the **GO** button and get your group moving.



Group Button

Clicking on this button allows you to change groups through the Modify Groups box.

Movement Mode Button

Clicking on this button cycles through the three movement modes. In **GREEN** mode, a group takes the safest path. For instance, the threat of storms causes ships in **GREEN** mode to enter open water squares only if there is no other choice available. Likewise, mule caravans with a **GREEN** mode avoid desert squares unless they have no other choice available. Groups in **YELLOW** mode take moderately dangerous shortcuts that may cross open water (sea) or deserts (land). Groups traveling in **RED** mode take the fastest route to their destination, no matter how great the danger. Terrain features on land may mean the shortest route is not necessarily the fastest route.

Buy/Sell Button

When you click this button, you enter the city screen of the city where your active group or unit stands. If you enter this screen before any other Venetian traders, you might discover a holy relic, which is then automatically sold at auction back in Venice. If the city's inhabitants have the Plague, you will be warned before you enter. If you trade there anyway, you might lose units and any cargo they carry - but you may realize extra profits as well.

Venice Button

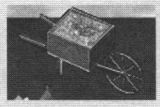
This button takes you to the Venice Screen. Click **DONE** to return to the main movement screen.

Trade Route Button

Click on this button to bring up the Trade Routes screen for the active unit. Click **DONE** to return to the main movement screen.

Ledger Button

This button allows you to access a variety of game information, including player info, city statistics, and mercenary locations. Click **CANCEL** to return to the main movement screen.



Road Button

The Venetians did everything they could to facilitate trade and travel, including funding local road builders. This button turns your mouse pointer into a shovel, and allows you to build roads. You can only build roads on explored squares, and roads cannot bridge large river squares. To build a road, click on a terrain square. This highlights the square and and shows how much it costs to build a road there. If you still want to build the road, click again on the same square. When you have finished building all the road segments you want, click again on the Road button to toggle the cursor back into a dagger. Any player can use roads no matter who built them.

End Turn Button

When you have finished moving your groups, wielding influence in Venice, and gathering information from around the world, go ahead and end your turn. Clicking on this button brings up your end of turn finances, and may prompt you to spend government money if you have not fulfilled your civic responsibility. Click on the **CANCEL** button to return to the Movement screen in order to carry out any last minute fixes and adjustments. The **REMOVE** button allows you to fire mercenary groups or eliminate a senator's stipend. Click on the appropriate line item to highlight it, and then click **REMOVE**. Click **OK** to advance to the next player's turn.

Text and Chat Bar

This bar shows information about units, cities and events, and players should get in the habit of checking this bar often during the game. In multiplayer games, it also displays messages the players have sent.

Ledger:

Read Messages

This button allows you to review all the messages you received in the turn.

Draft Messages

This button allows you to send your own messages or choose preset communiques. Click on the crest of the player to whom you want to send your note, then click at the beginning of the message bar and start typing. Preset options let you Propose a Pact with another player, send map information to another player, or broadcast your intention to Run for Doge or Pope.

City Report

This button allows you to review statistics for every city you have discovered. The left margin of the screen shows which players have access or are denied it, and whether or not any player controls the city. The city name and geographic region appear in the top center. Below that, a box lists the items the city produces. Beneath production, the Defense window shows the icons of the city's civil defense units. Finally, the City List window allows you to scroll through a list of known cities. The Detail map centers on the current city, while the Mini-Map shows most of the world. A double row of boxes at the bottom of the screen shows your warehouse capacity and contents.

Mercenaries

This button lists all the military units currently in your service. If you have no mercenaries, a message asks if you want to hire some.

Trade Groups

This button reviews all of your trade groups. The left column shows the current group's cargo. The Group box in the middle displays the group icons under the group's name. Directly below, the Statistics window lists the speed, capacity, and defense for this group. The right column shows the cities to which the current unit travels if it follows a trade route. (You can scroll through the list of groups by dragging the scroll bar button up and down the slider bar.) You can also locate units using the Detail and Mini-Map windows in the same manner as you use them in the Movement screen.

Commodities

This button accesses the same information as the Commodities button on the Market screen.

Player Graph This button shows your score in the game so far, and compares it with the other players.

Cancel Click on this button to return to the Movement Screen.

Trade Routes

The Trade Routes Screen

This screen allows you to create automatic trade routes for your groups, sending your ships sailing between ports and caravans traveling across country to distant cities, automatically buying and selling cargo. This allows you to carry out your trading without having to oversee every detail. Units on trade routes only require attention when calamities like storms, pirate attacks and the Plague strike. Otherwise, the computer zips through the group's movement, automatically buying and selling its cargoes.

Item Icons

These two columns display the icons for all commodities and guard units.

Trade Orders

This column shows the cargoes you want to purchase at each port on the trade route (up to four cities can be linked via one route). When the screen first appears, this column is empty.

Wait

This button lets you tell your trade units to stay at a city until they have picked up the entire cargo you told them to get. Otherwise your units buy as much of what you tell them to as is available when they arrive in the city.

Store

This button in the Trade Orders column allows you to tell your trade units to unload goods to your warehouse if there is no current demand for them.

Detail Map Window

This window allows you to examine explored cities and select them as destination ports for trade routes. The highlighted squares show the route your groups will take.

Group Window

This window displays all of the group's unit icons.

Next Unit

Clicking this button cycles through all the units in a group, allowing you to customize cargo manifests. You can also click in the Group window on the unit you wish to activate.

Clear

This button allows you to clear destination cities and cargo manifests one at a time, starting with the last one you established.

Done

Click on this button when your trade route is ready or to return to the Movement screen.

Mini Map

Clicking on a terrain square here centers the Detail map on the point you selected, and allows you to move your view from one city to another. The area in the dark red rectangle is the area enlarged in the Detail map.

Copy All

Clicking this button copies the cargo manifest of your first unit for every other unit in the group. If your group includes a mix of units, the computer copies each hold one at a time from left to right until it runs out of space. If the later units have more hold space than the first unit, then the extra space remains empty.

Mode

Clicking on this button cycles through the three movement modes explained in the Movement Screen section. Cycling through the options as you watch the maps in this screen allows you to see what effect each mode has on the route, and you can choose the level of danger that best meets your purposes. If you do not change it, the mode stays green.

Setting Up a Trade Route

Use the Detail map and the Mini-Map to locate cities between which you wish to establish a trade route as you would use the maps in the Movement screen. You can still right click on cities within the Detail map to obtain information on items available, access, and Plague conditions.

Next Unit

This allows you to give each unit in a trade group individual cargo orders, though they all follow the same route.

Starting City

Click on a city in the Detail map to make it your group's first destination, and its name appears in the top Trade Orders box. Below the city name is the cargo manifest of the current unit for you to fill with cargo. Drag items you want the unit to purchase in the first city, including any guard units, from the Item Icons columns to your cargo holds. You can right click on the city in the Detail map to determine what goods it supplies and in what quantities. If your cargo is not available at the port in which you chose to load it, that hold will be empty when your vessel leaves.

The exception to this rule is guard units. If guards are on your buy orders, your unit will hire whatever guard units are available, regardless of whether you want Light guards or Heavy guards. If no guards are present when you wish to hire them, that cargo slot stays empty.

Follow this procedure for each additional city you want on the trade route. Your group sells any cargo that it carries when it arrives at the new city unless it runs out of buyers or you give it orders to buy that cargo in the next city. Note that you may select a square without a city as a destination for a trade group. These are known as waypoints, and allow you to avoid pirate areas or sea spaces where storms might hit. You cannot change cargo at waypoints. You may select up to four cities for a trade route, and it always begins and ends in the same city. If you set a waypoint, select a city to which your route continues after that stop.

Special Orders

Each cargo manifest has two buttons next to it that allow you to fine tune each unit's orders. The Store button unloads your cargo directly into your warehouse in the destination city instead of selling it. If you don't have a warehouse in that city, a box will remind you of the need to purchase one the first time the unit makes port in that city. The Wait button causes the unit to pause in that city as long as it takes to fill its cargo holds. If there aren't enough goods available for a full load, the group won't leave the city that turn.

Canceling a Trade Route

To cancel your group's trade route, go to the trade route screen. Once there, click on Clear until all destination orders have been removed. A shortcut is to right click on your group and then give it any other orders.

City Screens

While every city in the game has its own screen, all City Screens have the same buttons and functions. You can right click on any city you wish to examine to call up its City Screen.

Trade Access Column

The column on the left side of the screen shows which (if any) players can trade with that city. A red bordered crest saying "Denied" indicates that that player does not have access to the city and therefore cannot trade or buy units

there. A green bordered crest saying "Access" indicates the player can trade in this city. A green bordered crest saying "Owner" shows that that player controls which other players have access to the city. Note that you always have access to Venice, and you can never attack it.

Item Icons

The two columns of item icons show all the commodities available in the game, as well as what the city pays for each. The number of colored icons in a commodity slot indicates the number of cargo units available. The number of gray or "shadow" icons indicates the city's demand for those items. You can also find the exact number of items supplied and demanded in the Commodities Ledger, accessed by the Ledger button on the Movement screen.

Civil Forces Box

The military units shown in the upper right-hand corner of the screen are the city's defenses. The richer the city, the bigger its army. Unlike mercenaries and Venice's Home Army and Fleet, these units cannot leave the city. After a fight, Civil Forces replenish themselves at the rate of one unit a turn.

Foreign Forces Box

This box appears when your military units enter a city to which you are denied access. The Attack button also becomes available. If you attack, the fight takes place on the combat screen. Good luck!

Bribe

This button only appears in independent cities that are closed to you. It only shows up when your trade units enter the city, or after your military units have attacked it but not won the fight. You can click on it to see just how much money it wants to give you access to it. You can either pay the bribe or cancel the transaction; if you agree to pay but do not have sufficient cash, you will not gain access. If you pay the bribe, your crest acquires a green border and the label "Access" in the Trade Access column.

Groups

You can click on this button to see any trade or military groups currently in the city. You can also attack military units other than the Civil Defenses through the Groups button. Done returns you to the Movement screen.

Done Button

This button returns you to the Movement screen.

Attacking a city

Failing an attack on a city removes your access to it. If you conquer a city by Military force, however, you get the option "Do you wish to grant control to Venice?" If you choose yes, all players (computer and human) gain access, and your popularity increases accordingly. If you choose no, your crest acquires a green border and the label Owner in the Trade Access column. As owner, you grant or deny access to other players at any time by clicking on their crests. If you deny another player access to a city with which he previously traded, the city destroys any warehouses he owned there. You might collect some looted commodities from the wreckage. You cannot bribe a city to gain control, only access.

Using Mercenaries for City Defense

Hired mercenaries always defend cities that were open to trade for all Venetians when first discovered, or that were conquered and given over to the control of Venice. They take the field before the Civil Defenses get attacked. Mercenaries also defend a city owned by the same player that hired them, but they do not defend a city that Venetians have bribed access to.

Item Availability

Players can buy commodities in a city either because another player has just sold them, or because that city distributes them. Items sold into a city stay there for a short period of time. If players do not buy them, then local merchants accomplish the sale of these items behind the scenes.

The default amount of any commodity in a city is determined by the distance of that city from the commodity's point of origin, and the "strength" with which that item is distributed. In other words, some commodities distributed in cities far from their points of origin may show up in a city, while other goods only appear where they are actually produced.

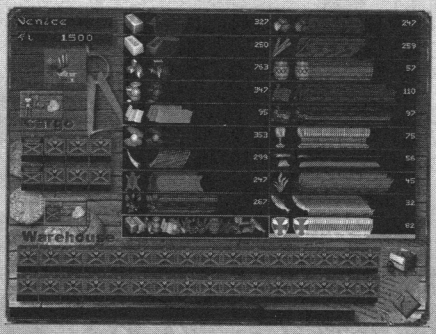
Items shipped out of a city as cargo by a player reduce the quantity of goods available for subsequent purchase for a few turns. The higher the maximum default, the faster commodities return. The self-generated amount of any commodity in a city never climbs above the maximum default setting.

Item Prices

Commodity prices change between player's turns, based on the many parameters of the game's economic engine. The further a city is from a commodity's point of origin, the more it pays for that item. During a siege, excommunication or plague, cities pay premium rates for commodities not produced there. A few turns after the calamity passes, prices return to normal levels.

Relics

The first player to enter a city has a chance to find a holy relic. These relics are immediately sold back in Venice. A message announcing the discovery is broadcast to the other players. Relics are usually worth more if they are found in a previously hostile city.



Market Screen

The market is a key location, because this is where your trade units buy and sell their merchandise. Each city's Market screen shows the number of goods available and the number the city demands. All Market screens have the same buttons and functions, though supply and demand varies with each individual location. Units access a city's Market screen when they make port, unless that city is infected with Plague.

City Name Window

This window tells you which city you are in.

Wealth Window

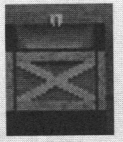
This window shows how many florins you have. As you conduct your business, the value changes to reflect your new total. If your cursor is shaped like a commodity, then the price of that item has been deducted from your wealth, even if you have no hold in which to stow it. Clicking on the commodity returns your cursor to normal and reveals your actual wealth.

Group Box

This box shows which unit is currently active. If the trade group includes more than one unit, the arrows on either side of the box let you cycle through all the units you want to load or unload.

Sell Unit

If you start running short on cash, or you just want to get rid of a unit, you can use this button to sell a trade unit. You recoup about half the cost of buying a new unit of the same type.

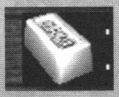


Cargo Box

This box displays the trade unit's hold, and you can drag items to and from these holds to buy or sell them. You can also use the Sell All button as a short cut to unloading. Boxes with x's on them are unavailable.

Sell All

You can click on this button to sell all the contents of your ship, though guard units will remain. If the city has no more demand for your items, you get a pop up asking if you want to store your cargo in a warehouse until demand returns. If you click **YES**, your cargo is unloaded into your existing warehouse space, or you may buy eight more warehouse holds. If you click **NO** or do not have enough money to buy warehouse space, the items remain on board your trade units. The holds of overflow items turn red, and this indicates that they will be sold in any turn of yours that a demand comes up. Clicking on an individual hold cancels this sell order, and its background turns black.



Item Icons

The two columns of item icons show all the commodities available in the game, as well as what the city pays (or charges) for each. Multiple icons of one item indicate how many trade goods are available; multiple gray (shadowed) icons indicate the demand for those items. When you mouse over a commodity in these columns, the Text bar at the bottom of the screen lists the exact number available and demanded. A city never supplies both types of guard units (heavy and light), and it might not supply either one.

Commodities Button

This button shows you the same display as does the Commodities button in the Ledger. It allows you to examine the intricacies of your known world's economics.

Warehouse Bar

These two rows of boxes indicate your available warehouse "holds." Like ship holds and caravan loads, x's cover them if you don't have access to them. If you have already purchased warehouse space in the city, it appears here. You can purchase each block of eight warehouse holds by clicking on the warehouse bar. To store a commodity in your warehouse, drag it over an empty warehouse hold. If you don't yet own that hold, a message box asks if you want to pay 250 florins to acquire eight holds. Stored items (those with red backgrounds) will be sold automatically in your turn if a demand for them arises. Click on an individual item to cancel this sell order (its background turns black)

Message Bar

This bar shows the number of units available or in demand of each commodity when you run your mouse over them. When you make a trade, it displays the price per unit bought or sold.

Done

This button takes you back to the main screen when you are finished trading in this port. You'll either resume movement with the current unit, move on to the next unit in the movement queue if you have no movement left, or go on to the End Turn box if no more units are available.

The Commodities Screen

The Commodities Screen lets you compare prices and supplies between the cities you have visited. You access the Commodities Screen from the Ledger button on the Movement Screen and from the Commodities button in the City screens.

Item Icons

These two columns show all the icons for tradable commodities, including guard units.

Base Price

This window tells you what item you have chosen, and the base price for the item. Market conditions can drive the price up or down. The actual price of an item can vary in each game of Merchant Prince II, and each new turn in a game. Clicking on an item displays its base price. Unless you do something different, the computer gives you the information for silver, the first item in the list.

Description

This window gives a short description of the item selected.

Map Point

If you have accessed the Commodities Ledger while your current active group is in a city, this button reads "To [city name]." The Detail and Mini-Maps center on that city. Otherwise, the button reads "To Venice."

List of Known Cities

This window lists all cities you have discovered, in descending order from the city that pays the most florins for the current commodity to the city that pays the least. Each entry gives the price paid for the item, the city name, both the number of units of the current item actually present (available) in the city and the number in demand, and finally, whether you have access to the city. Drag the yin yang button up and down the slider to scroll through the whole list. The highlighted city becomes the active city on the Mini-Map.

Detail Map

The Detail map shows a close up map centered on your current active city. Clicking on a city in this map makes it the active city and highlights the city's name on the scrolling List of Known Cities.

Mini-Map

The Mini-Map shows almost the entire game map, and the dark red rectangle shows the edges of the Detail map.

Exit

Click on this button to return to the previous screen.

The Venice Screen

The Venice Screen is the heart of Merchant Prince II's most Machiavellian aspects. Just as events in Venice influenced developments around the world, so too can players use its buildings to increase their own power. This screen gives players access to Venice's politics and those of the Vatican, lets them hire mercenaries from around the world, increase their own popularity, hire new trade units, hire thugs to eliminate rivals, or even fund amazing new discoveries.

The Clock Tower

The historical clock tower, completed in 1499 and featuring the world's first digital clock, is at the top and center of the square. Click here for methods of increasing your popularity. The screen lists both your available wealth and your current popularity (which can reach as high as 95 percent). Increasing this percentage helps you gain influence in the senate and the church. A low popularity makes you and your representatives targets for character and physical assassinations.

You have five ways to increase your popularity, though you can only make one attempt per turn. Clicking on each icon shows the number of florins you pay, and the Weight window lists the maximum increase in percentage points that you can gain. The actual bonus you gain from any particular attempt you make is random. The Text bar describes the action, as detailed below.

Build Villa

Once Venice controlled the surrounding mainland, called the Veneto, wealthy city dwellers began to build palatial villas there to display their wealth and impress potential political and business partners. Villas increase the effectiveness of art purchases and sponsored parties. Each player may build only one villa at a time, though additions make the structure grander and increase the impression you make on the populace. Watch out, though, because arsonists can torch your villa.

Patron of the Arts

Italy lead the Renaissance art movement, and Venice was the early leader of Italy. In turn, Venetian art was heavily influenced by styles of the Eastern Orthodox Church in Byzantium. In fact, the Venetians were so enamored of Byzantine art that they used the forces of the Fourth Crusade to sack that already Christian city. As an art patron in the game, you can commission either a painting or a sculpture. Sculptures are cheaper but provide a smaller popularity increase than paintings.

Party

Sponsoring a party is a sure way to gain popularity. Venetians demonstrated a real love of pageants over the centuries. They created the mature form of the Masquerade, a licentious Mardi Gras like affair that lasted a full six months. Venice still throws its Masquerade (on a smaller scale) every year.

Benefice

Many of the historical merchant princes donated money or works of art to Santa Marc's as acts of devotion and public relations. However, since your fel-

low citizens expect you to prove your faith, this does not always give you a benefit.

St. Marc's Basilica

Construction on Santa Marc's Basilica began in 830 to commemorate the "pious theft" of St. Marc's remains from Alexandria. Once finished, the church became the focal point of Venetian civic life. The interior boasts gold and artifacts acquired during the sack of Byzantium (Constantinople), part of the Fourth Crusade.

This is also the site for your role in church politics. Click here for the College of Cardinals screen, where you can examine your religious options.

The Pope

The top quarter of the screen includes buttons that remain dark unless you have become the pope. You take on this august role by winning election in the College of Cardinals after the previous pope dies, an act that requires the support of a majority of cardinals. You cannot win the papacy twice in succession. If a tie occurs, elections are held each turn until the tie is resolved. Until the tie is broken, no one acts as pope.

Call Crusade

Successfully calling a crusade summons an army to the pope's city of origin and under his control, much as the First and Fourth occurred. It takes from two to five turns for the Crusaders to gather. Only one crusade can take place at a time.

Add Cardinals

The sale of cardinalships provided income for many popes, and whoever controls the pope skims nearly a quarter of the money from each sale. The number of cardinals available can increase by increments of up to six to a maximum of 36. The college shrinks when Cardinals die or are assassinated, but the minimum is 24.

Excommunicate

A Pope may excommunicate one city at a time. This powerful punishment affects trade with it and reduces the tax base, indirectly causing its Civil Forces to shrink. Prices for items it does not produce also temporarily increase. Excommunication is only temporary and can only be used every two to six turns.

Indulgence Rate Slider

The slider sets the price of indulgences that cardinals sell. The pope can only raise this rate, but not lower it. The amount shown is the amount in florins

that each cardinal receives every turn. Raising the indulgence level can cause the church to become unpopular, which could lead to serious repercussions. Any change in the rate made by a pope takes effect the next turn.

The Cardinals

Most of the screen shows information about the College of Cardinals. Players buy cardinalships from the pope and staff them with a family member. Other cities and countries also buy and possess cardinals. Cardinals earn a stipend every turn based on the Indulgence level (set by the pope; see above). Each cardinal gets one vote in Papal elections, and a player must have at least one cardinal in his control to be elected pope. When cardinals die, the cardinalship returns to the pope and must be repurchased.

Family Crests

The left side of the screen shows the crests and names of the four players. The icons of each cardinal controlled by each family, if any, appear next to each crest.

Your Wealth

The bottom left corner lists your wealth in florins.

Factions

The center and right columns display the cardinals loyal to the other political factions in the college. Icons representing any vacant cardinalships show up under the heading Available. Below this, the screen lists the current purchase price of a cardinalship.

Buy Cardinal

This button lets you purchase a cardinal. The amount below the Available box is deducted from your treasury for each position you purchase, unless no positions are available or you do not have sufficient funds.

Exit

Clicking on this button returns you to the Venice screen.

Doge's Palace

Venice's Palace was completed in 1424. It combines the doge's own quarters with the city's courts and the senate. Click here to go to the Senate screen, where you control your factions political manueverings.

The Doge

The top half of the screen includes options only Venice's doge, the head of the senate, can access. The exception is the Accuse button, which the Council Head

can use. The senate elects a new doge every ten years, or whenever the current doge dies. The doge is responsible for the defense of Venice, although he may delegate that responsibility to other players by assigning offices. The year after an election, the new doge can appoint either a player's faction or the neutral coalition (a nonaligned group of families represented by a green crest with a golden navigators' wheel) to control each of the four offices: Council Head, General, Admiral, and Minister of Construction. The doge can only assign one office to his own family, and he must assign a position to each player who controls a senator. The only faction that can control more than one office is the Neutral Coalition. The doge has the power to change the tax rate and the sums paid to office holders. You need not change anything if you are satisfied with the treasury.

Council Head

The Council Head acts as the chief prosecutor for the Council of Ten, the high court and inner circle of the Venetian government. A Council Head can Accuse one senator of treason every year. Accusations are more likely to succeed if a senator does not have a high popularity rating. A successful prosecution results in the senator being hung (Venice never cared for treason). The Neutral Coalition gains control of the empty senate seat. The Council Head receives no money from the tax coffers.

General

The General leads the Home Army. He receives a stipend every turn (the silver coin or coins in the bar beneath the box), from which he is expected to pay the upkeep of the Army and to hire and maintain mercenaries to help defend Venice. The General may lose popularity if he does not spend most of his budget funding the Home Army or mercenaries.

Admiral

The Admiral commands the ships and marines of the Home Fleet. He also receives a stipend every turn (the silver coin or coins in the bar beneath the box), out of which he is expected to pay the upkeep of the Fleet and to hire and maintain mercenaries to advance Venice's interests. The Admiral may lose popularity if he does not spend most of his budget this way.

Minister of Construction

As Venetian traders spread out across the world, the city's leaders hoped to emulate Rome's road-building glories, and have all roads lead to Venice. The Minister of Construction receives a stipend every turn to pay for road construction. This construction can occur on any part of land the player has explored. Every player can use any road or bridge, no matter who builds it.

The Minister may lose popularity if he does not spend most of his budget funding construction.

The Senate

Treasury

The amount of florins in the treasury equals the current turn's tax income, plus any leftover money from previous turns. A bar below each budgeted office shows the stipend that office receives each turn. The doge can adjust the stipends for each office using the plus and minus buttons, though no stipend can be less than 1000 florins (one silver coin). If the total amount paid out in stipends is lower than the total amount of taxes that year, the treasury increases - and vice versa. A gold coin represents 10,000 florins; the silver one represents 1,000 florins.

Tax Rate

The doge can use the slider bar to change the tax rate. The number in the window indicates the number of silver coins generated per turn. A high tax rate tends to make the doge unpopular, while a low one tends to improve his popularity.

The Senators

The Senators section of the screen shows the Council of Ten, the ten most powerful senators. The bar to the right of each senator's portrait indicates his degree of loyalty; the crest pictured above the loyalty bar shows which faction controls him. A short red loyalty bar indicates a senator who would gladly leave his faction, while a long green bar shows great loyalty to the faction pictured. To gain a senator's allegiance, a player must bribe him. A family may only bribe two new senators per turn, but you may bribe them as many times as you like (or have money). A player needs to overcome the senator's allegiance to his current family or the Neutral Coalition. Your family's popularity and the senator's loyalty to his current faction determine the cost of this first step. Once you hire him, you can pay him a small stipend every turn or a one time bonus. Either action can increase the senator's loyalty to you, as will increasing your own popularity.

Offering Bribes

To bribe a senator, click on his portrait. This brings up the Bribe box, with a slider that lets you adjust your percentage chance of success, and a window that shows the actual amount of the bribe. The default setting is either the amount required to get your best chance of success, or your total wealth, if you do not have enough florins for optimal odds. Slide the button up and

down to adjust your chance of success and the amount offered. Click on Bribe when you are ready to make the attempt.

If a bribe succeeds, you have the option of making further one-time bribes or setting up an annual stipend to improve the senator's loyalty to your faction. Stipends are automatically deducted from your treasury every turn unless you stop them or the senator leaves your control. Without such a stipend, a senator's loyalty slowly moves to match the level of his controller's popularity. The stipend helps determine the amount by which his loyalty to your family increases every turn. Individual bribes can raise a senator's loyalty by up to ten points.

You can also bribe senators who have pledged their allegiance to another faction, but they are more expensive to acquire than senators of neutral affiliation. A senator who will gain you either a majority or a plurality (a majority shared with one other player) is also more expensive.

Wealth

The Wealth arrow shows how much you have in your treasury.

The Factions

The bottom row shows the political and financial standings of the players. Each box includes the player's level of expertise icon, a Popularity bar whose length and color graphically indicate a factions popularity, and the crest representing that faction. Click on a box to see that faction's actual statistics, including percentage of popularity and total worth.

Exit

Click on this button to return to Venice.

Workshop

This building does nothing unless you have selected the technology option. If you have, then clicking on it allows you to spend florins on researching, discovering, and locating new ideas and applications. Money spent here represents more than just researchers toiling away in their libraries. During the Middle Ages and Renaissance, humanity had made progress on many fronts, but lack of communication and interest prevented much use of these discoveries. Spending money on innovations represents players making contact with people who have technologies they are looking for, the buying of information, funding scholars to research records from Roman (and earlier) times, and reacting to current crises. Of course, it can also represent the money paid to Leonardo DaVinci and others for inventions.

When the research option is on, players no longer have access to as many units as in the standard game until they do the necessary research. Thus, the only ships they can buy are small galleys until they research large galleys, small cogs, and finally large cogs. They get a standard caravan until they research camel teams and mountain teams. The only mercenaries they can hire are footmen, archers and marines until they research the other unit types.

At the workshop, players can choose from a number of different categories. They can research troops, land movement, sea movement, Venice itself, or general categories. Each has its own part of the screen. Players can only research one technology each year, and the effects of research come into play immediately. The technologies are more fully described later in the manual. Players can click on the Done button whenever they are finished.

Campanile

Click on the bell tower to peruse the available mercenaries for hire. More mercenary groups become available as time passes, though you can only hire mercenaries in cities to which you have access. Mercenaries in your employ can conquer cities, suppress pirates and brigands, or attack rival trade groups. Most mercenaries already have their own ships and can travel by land or sea. Groups that include Horse Archers cannot travel on water and groups that include Marines cannot travel on land. Mercenary groups that have taken losses regenerate one unit per turn if they are located in a city to which their employer has access. If you fire a Mercenary group while it is away from its home city, it makes its way back home, sometimes stopping in friendly cities to recover damage.

Defending Your Interests

You can attack and destroy rivals' groups, causing them to lose all the commodities they carry. This also gives you the chance to capture a rival's trade units. Of course, attacking other Venetians is risky because if word of your deeds gets out, you must pay reparations, and your popularity will plummet. The farther away from Venice that your attack occurs, the less likely you are to be caught.

To attack, move your Mercenary group into the same square as its target. Right click on the stack to bring up the Groups box and click the Attack button. A pop-up box asks if you are sure you want to attack another Venetian. If you click OK, then your troops make the attack, and the combat screen shows the

forces on either side of the conflict.

If you are successful, a new box announces anything you capture, if there are any captives. Clicking OK returns you to the Groups box. Use the Next key to cycle through any captured units, all named Spoils, followed by a number. These units now belong to you, and you can treat them as you would any other trade groups.

If word of your action reaches Venice, you may be in trouble. If this happens, you will receive notification of how much you have to pay in reparations and how much popularity you lose. The fine is immediately deducted from your treasury, but cannot exceed that amount. During his turn, your opponent receives a message announcing the attack and his losses.

Firing Troops

You can dismiss your soldiers in one of two ways. You can highlight a mercenary group in either the Mercenaries ledger or the Turn Summary screen. Then click the Remove button.

Guildhall

In the Guildhall, you can change music and sound settings, save games of Merchant Prince II, save files of world maps you particularly like, and even surrender your position to a computer player.

Save Game

This option saves your game to the current disk drive under its current name. Merchant Prince 2 only recognizes files as games if the last four characters are .GAM. When you're happy with the name, click on OK to continue with the save.

Save Game As

This option allows you to type a new name for your game, or save it on a different drive.

Load Old

This option allows you to load a saved game. The Saved Game box and the Drive box appear, allowing you to load games in other directories. In the Saved Game box, you can scroll up and down to see a list of all of your previously saved games. Highlight your choice by clicking it. If you saved to a different drive, click on the drive letter in the drive box and then browse for your saved game.

Return to Windows

This option ends your current game; all changes since your last save are lost when you choose this option.

Music On/Off

This option turns the music on or off. The default position is On.

Sound On/Off

This option turns the sound effects on or off. The default position is On.

Auto Save On/Off

"On" tells the computer to save the game after each human player's turn. The default position is OFF.

Quit Position

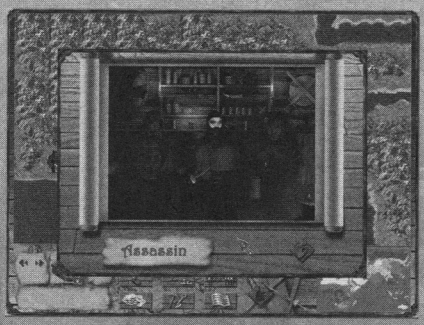
If you must quit a multiplayer game, you can click on this button to allow the other players to continue. A computer player takes control of your faction at the end of your turn. This change is permanent; you have no way to wrest control from the AI.

Save Current Map

This option allows you to replay the current map from the beginning. Saving map files is especially useful when you generate an interesting random map, but you might also want to save a
particularly nifty economic situation on the historic map, as well. The only limit on the number of saved maps is the space on your hard drive.

Return to Main Menu Bar

Clicking on this bar takes you back to the Venice screen.



Den of Iniquities

Like all cities, Venice has its share of low-life scum willing to do its dirty work (or design its computer games). You can hire these degenerates to handle a wide variety of actions, both against other families and other countries. It is easier (and cheaper) to take actions against less popular families. If your agent provocateur gets caught, you might have to pay a fine. Needless to say, whether or not you succeed in your machinations, your popularity falls dramatically if you're found out.

Arsonist

Click on the arsonist to see how much it costs to torch other families' warehouses and villas. For warehouses, choose a city and you will see the number and owners of warehouses operating there. You can only torch one location per turn.

Slanderer

Hiring this gossip spreads negative rumors that affect other family's popularity. You can create your own rumors as well, using the slanders.lie file.

Assassin

You can commission this murderer to get political obstacles out of your way. Allowable targets are: the pope, the doge, player-controlled cardinals and player-controlled senators.

Bazaar

You can set up warehouses in any city where you do business. You can move goods to ships from caravans and vice versa using a warehouse, you can stockpile goods, you can make sure your trade units are hauling at maximum capacity, and you can let commodities trickle into the local economy to respond to a sluggish demand.

City Name Window

This window displays the name of the current city.

Item Icons

These two columns show the icons for tradable items, including guard units.

Wealth Window

This window shows your current treasury. When you sell commodities, your treasury increases.

List of Known Cities

This window lists all cities you have discovered. Move the slider up and down to scroll through the whole list. The selected city becomes the current city.

Sell All

Click on this button to empty your warehouses. If the city has no demand for items, their holds turn red, indicating that they will be sold whenever demand occurs. Click on an individual hold to cancel this sell order.

Commodities

This button reveals the same information as the Commodities Screen.

Warehouse

These two rows of boxes indicate your possible warehouse holds. Like ship holds and caravan loads, they have an X over them if you don't own them. You can buy warehouse space in units of eight. To store a commodity in your warehouse, drag the item over an empty or unowned warehouse hold. If you don't yet own that hold, a message box asks if you want to pay 250 florins to acquire eight holds.

Text Bar

Messages about your warehouse or its city appear here.

Done

Clicking this button takes you back to the movement screen.

Text Bar

This provides brief descriptions of the buildings in Venice and their functions when you run the mouse cursor over the cityscape.

Done

This button sends you to the Movement screen.

Villas

These structures represent player villas, once any of them build one. You can see how much someone has spent on a villa by its size. If an arsonist has torched one, rubble appears in its place.

Innovations

Mercenary Research

Players begin a technology game able to hire only footmen (attack 2/defend 3), archers (3/2) and marines (3,3).

Cavalry: Standard horse troops (3,3).

Horse Archers: Horsemen trained from birth in the intricacies of mounted archery (3,2). Requires Cavalry.

Fusiliers: Lightly armored troops with these new-fangled firearms (4,2).

Knights: Heavily armored mounted troops, often nobles (5/3). Requires Cavalry.

Siege trains: Cannons and other heavy weapons (5/2). Requires Fusiliers.

Ship Research

Players start with Small Galley (15 move points and 2 cargo).

Large Galley: Fast ship from the basic game (15/4).

Small Cog: Slow but sturdy ship (9/6).

Large Cog: Slow, sturdy and big (9/8).

Sextant: Sailors with these could better navigate and avoid danger. Chance of being swamped in a storm is reduced.

Pirate Informant: Someone lets you know where the pirates are planning their raids. Your chance of avoiding a pirate increases.

Pirate Ally: A friend among the brethren convinces pirates to seek out your enemies. The chance other players get pirated goes up.

Land Research

Players start with Caravan units that turn into mule or camel trains when players conduct the necessary research.

Mule Train: These move over mountains faster than other units and are more likely to survive rockslides.

Camel Train: These move through deserts more quickly, and their natural attributes enable them to survive many sandstorms.

Mountain Guides: Knowledgeable sherpas and trackers know which paths are dangerous. Hiring them increases your chance of surviving a rockslide. Require Mule Train.

Desert Guides: These wise desert dwellers can increase your chance of avoiding sandstorms. Requires Camel Train.

Venice Research

Machiavelli the Prince: By studying with old Niccolo himself, you can learn the ins and outs of political manipulation. The cost of bribing senators is reduced for you.

Poisons: Your travels have shown you the value not only of food spices but also of deadly ones. If you hire an assassin, he is more likely to succeed.

Printing Press: The faster you can spread a lie, the more harm it does. Your slanders become more potent.

Architecture: The homes of those willing to experiment with new building techniques and forms surpass those of their more conventional neighbors. You cannot build a large villa without this.

Decadence: Everybody likes a good party, and yours are the best. Your popu-

larity bonus from parties is increased.

Michelangelo: You have convinced the best artists to work for you. Your popularity bonus from art is increased.

Fireproofing: New methods of making your home flame resistant decrease the success of arsonists targeting your villa and warehouses.

Poison Antidote: Many assassins like poisons, but you have learned to beat their evil. Assassinations against your allies are less successful.

Chauvinism: This refers to a strident patriotism, not to a retarded opposition to females. Since everyone knows you love Venice so much, the chance of one of your senators hanging for treason is decreased.

General Research

Dry Powder: Many guards have don't even know how to use their guns, but you have given them the powder they need to become more effective. Your light and heavy guards gets a bonus in combat.

Civic Sanitation: Europe could have avoided much illness if it could have kept its cities clean. You have begun spreading this knowledge, and the chance of plague hitting any city is thus reduced. Requires Hygiene.

Giant Rat of Sumatra: Someone has released demonic plague-bearing rats! It couldn't have been you, but the chance of any city getting plague increases dramatically. Requires Heresy and Religious Intolerance.

Hygiene: Teaching your employees to bathe has reduced their chances of dying from the plague when they leave an infected city.

Ancient Legends: Stories abound of lost cities. Your scholars have found the exact location of some undiscovered city.

Telescope: Your familiarity with optics has allowed you to equip your employees with these marvels. They can see farther than can normal units.

Heresy: Someone has been planting heretical ideas in certain cities. Thus, they stay excommunicated longer.

Medic: You have assigned decent medics (and not just leaches) to follow your troops around. They can heal both inside and outside of cities.

Religious Intolerance: Your propaganda has made crusaders that much more fanatic. They stay on crusade longer than they otherwise would.

Scenarios

Die Hanse

The Hanseatic League reigned supreme in Germany at the same time the merchant princes were remaking Venice. At one point it included as many as 170 cities, and only began to lose influence when Sweden, Denmark and Russia began to exert their power. Perhaps the Hanseatic League would not have lost its influence had it been able to open such keys to the orient as Venice, Genoa and Milan.

The Mediterranean

This scenario covers the same time period as the basic game and complements the Hanseatic League scenario. As in the basic game, players represent Venetian families and trading interests, though not the truly powerful ones. Just as Die Hanse covers Northern Europe, this scenario examines the Mediterranean region in further detail, with portions of the France and southern Germany included to simulate links with the Hanseatic League. Players should seek out Europe and Africa's ports-of-entry - those places from which the wealth of Asia and Africa could reach Europe's elite.

The Orient

This historical scenario starts with players in Shanghai, traveling the Orient. The game covers the 16th and 17th centuries of the Ming Dynasty, while the Manchus began their rise to power. The period is rich in trading opportunities, with borders opening and Western traders driving up prices for some commodities. The period is also rich in danger, with the Manchus and other groups beginning their incursions into the rest of the continent. Spices, opium, silk, rice and other trade goods all play key roles in this game, and players who can avoid or suppress the Manchus should end up with wealth beyond dreams.

Marco Polo

Land exploration has difficulties all its own, and this scenario simulates the many difficulties inherent in such undertakings. Players should focus on land units, exploration, road building and river travel for their success. Sandstorms and rockslides will be a major threat. Players may also find it valuable to send mercenary groups marauding across the prime trade roads.

Atlantis

The cataclysm has destroyed the continent of Atlantis, and the remnants slowly sink beneath the waves. For the intrepid, however, the rising waters are no barrier to profit. Atlantis' great roads may be no more, but the seas offer new

opportunities. The continent's once vaunted stability is no more, however, and such powers as Lemuria and Mu will try to usurp Atlantis' rightful place on top. The merchant princes seek to wring every last bit of profit out of the water-soaked citizens of Atlantis, so that they might retire to a safer place - like the Middle East.

Primary Changes

Philosophy

While we're pretty happy about all the games we've created here at Holistic Design, Merchant Prince has always held a special place in our hearts. It first came out in 1993, saw light again in 1995 as Machiavelli the Prince, and now we get the chance to do it again. More than a few people have asked why we've rereleased it, especially since the first two versions were so good.

The main reason that Talonsoft wanted us to rerelease Merchant Prince II is that it's an excellent game that new gamers have no chance of finding in stores. It has never been available as a Windows game, and some new machines have trouble running the old versions of the game. Some people would even get reports of negative memory space when they tried to install the game - we had never taken into account gigs of hard drive space when we first released it, and the install program would view all this extra memory as negative space!

We think Merchant Prince is a unique game, one with a number of features not seen in other games. When we introduce new players to the game, they invariably comment on its economics and politics, as well as its historical feel. Thus, our philosophy in creating Merchant Prince II was to make the game more accessible to old and new players alike, and add new options that could make it even more interesting and exciting. We hope you like what we've come up with.

-Holistic Design

HOT KEYS:

F1- Den of Iniquities
F2- Popularity
F3- Buy Units
F4- Hire Mercenaries
F5- Saint Marc's Basilica
F6- The Doge
F7- Save Dialog
F8- Load Dialog
F9- Quick Save
F10- Quick Load

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If you have a technical problem concerning the operation of our software, please contact our technical support staff. When you call or write, be at your computer if possible and have the following information ready: computer type, available hard drive space, total RAM, type of video card, and a list of options you chose when you installed the game.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT: 1-410-933-9191, M-F 9-5pm, EST
Talonsoft, 9900 Franklin Square Drive Suite A, Baltimore, MD 21236

If you would like to contact us on-line, you will find us at:
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E-mail us at tech@talonsoft.com

Note: This information is for technical support only and representives cannot provide game hints or suggestions.

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Before contacting Technical Support, please be prepared. In order to assist you as efficiently as possible, we will need to know as much information about your computer and the problem as possible. If you can not provide the information in the check list below, then please contact your computer manufacturer's technical support department before contacting Talonsoft, otherwise we will be unable to solve your problem.

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- CD-ROM Drive speed and manufacturer
- Total amount of system RAM
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- The make and model of your Sound Card
- Mouse and driver information
- Version of DirectX installed on your system

Please describe the circumstances, including any error messages, of your problem as clearly as possible.

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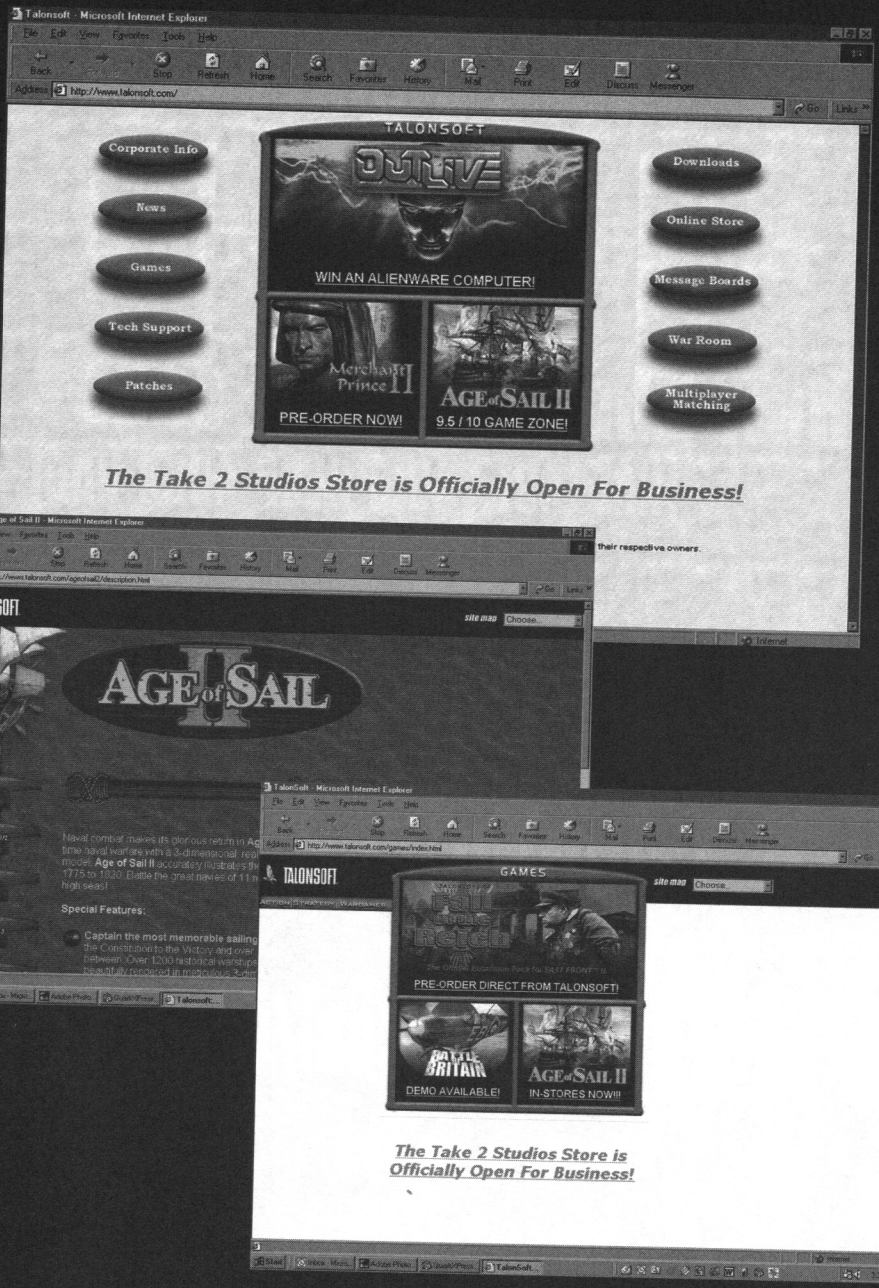

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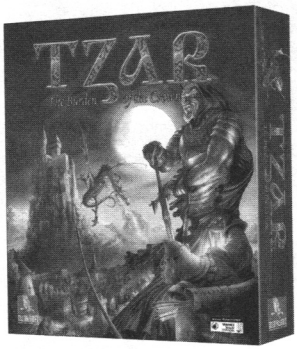

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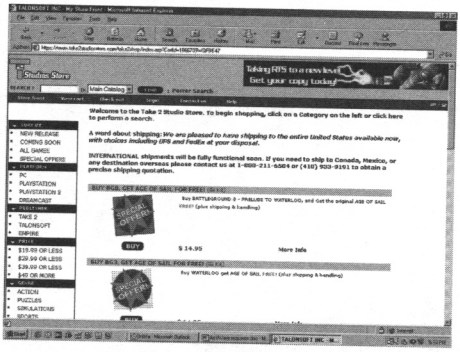

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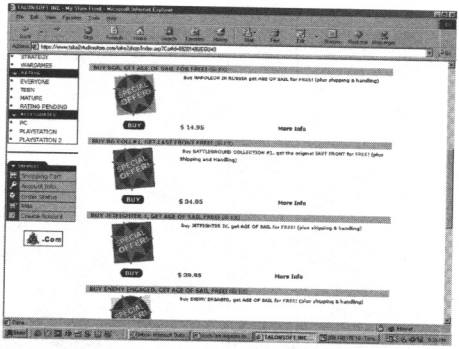

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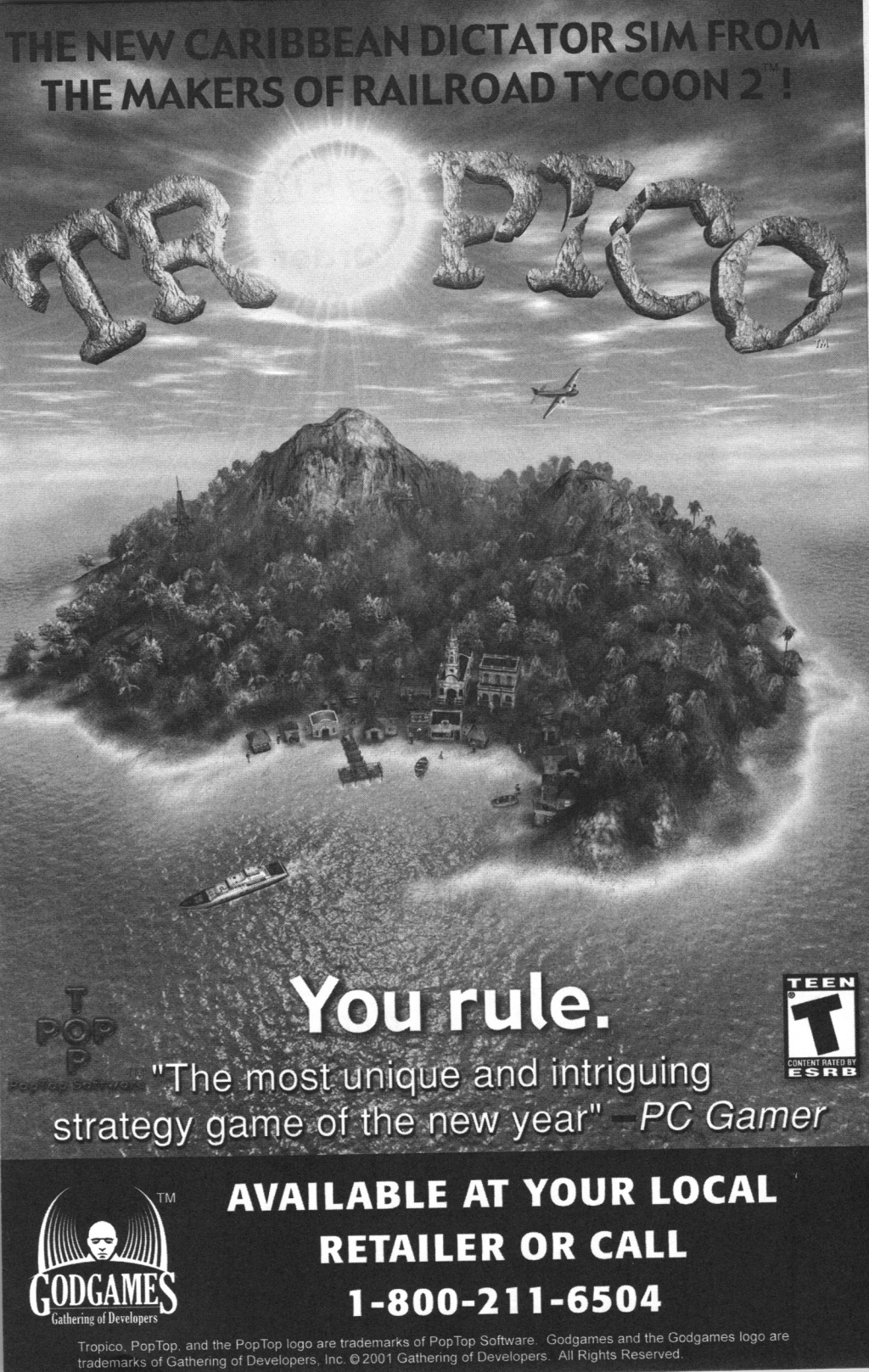
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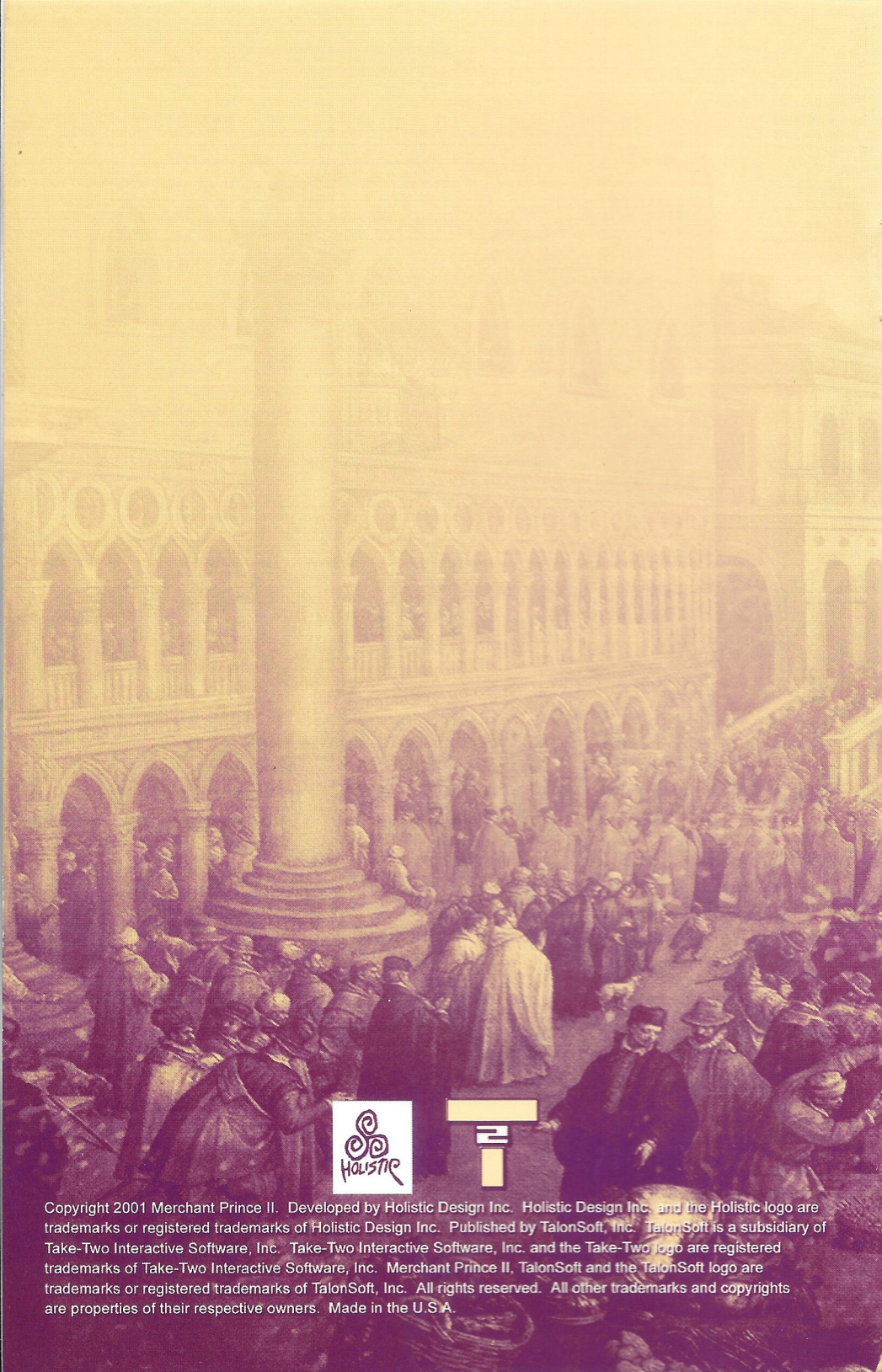

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